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Sen. Bulloch hosts Early County 2055 luncheon



ATLANTA – State Sen. John Bulloch (R-Ochlocknee) recently hosted a luncheon in conjunction with Rep. Gerald Greene (D-Cuthbert) and the Early County 2055 (EC2055) project at The Commerce Club in Atlanta. Business owners, constituents and stakeholders of Early County gathered to hear a presentation on the long-term revitalization efforts being developed by EC2055, founded by long-time county residents Charles and Catherine Rice.

Early County was once a thriving community in southwest Georgia, but has been faced with negative economic changes that impacted the farming and manufacturing industries. It is the goal of EC2055 to revitalize Blakely, the county seat, through a 50-year economic development effort. The plan includes downtown restorations, retirement and affordable housing developments, tourism initiatives and even establishing the film industry within the county.

“It has been an honor to host such a significant event that represents the revolutionary changes that will soon be made to Blakely and Early County as a whole,” Sen. Bulloch said. “Charles and Catherine Rice are true visionaries, and through their hard work and commitment to the betterment of southwest Georgia, we will see a remarkable transformation in that area.”

The luncheon featured a presentation by Nathan Norris of PlaceMakers, LLC, the planning and development advisory firm hired by EC2055. Norris illustrated the economic initiatives that are planned for Blakely, and encouraged everyone to get involved in the revitalization efforts. C. Barton Rice, Jr., son of the project's founders, opened the event and introduced his father, Charles, to make closing remarks. Describing the transformation of the county in the recent past and near future, Mr. Rice stated that "change is happening at the speed of light."

As chairman of the Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee, Sen. Bulloch hopes that this project will further the development and success of the agriculture industry in southwest Georgia. Establishing organic farming systems in Blakely is one of the many proposed plans within EC2055.

Pictured above (L-R): Charles B. Rice, founder of Early County 2055, and Senator John Bulloch.

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Sen. John Bulloch represents the 11th Senate District which includes Colquitt, Decatur, Early, Grady, Miller and Seminole counties and portions of Mitchell and Thomas counties. He may be reached by phone at 404.656.0040 or by e-mail at john.bulloch@senate.ga.gov.